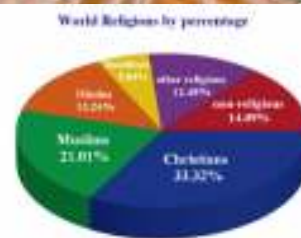


Good morning! Last week we looked at the first part of Acts 2 and we talked about how the disciples received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Our key verse was **Acts 2:4, "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."** Most Bible scholars consider this event to be the birth of the church and from this point on God began to rapidly grow His church.



The rapid growth of the Christian church is one of the most amazing facts of history. When the Holy Spirit came upon them with power, there were only about 120 disciples. Today, 33% of the world population, over 2 billion people, identify themselves as followers of Jesus Christ. An additional 21% of the people of the world identify themselves as Muslims. The Muslim religion, Islam, is not Christian, but we should remember that it is a religion which considers Jesus a major prophet. Added together the lives of well over half of all people alive today have been profoundly influenced by Jesus Christ.



Even in non-Christians nations, such as India, China, or Japan, thousands of orphanages, schools and hospitals have been built by Christian workers. And in the poorest countries of the world, millions of people rely on Christian aid organizations for basic needs like food and clothing. In one form or another, Christian ministry has touched the lives of people in almost every town and village in the world. In **Acts 1:8**, Jesus told the disciples, **"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."** These prophetic words have already been fulfilled around the world in amazing ways. But as we discussed last week, the work is still not complete. Christians are still being empowered by the Holy Spirit to be bold witnesses for Jesus to the ends of the earth.

When the Spirit came, Peter began to explain what was happening to the large crowd that had gathered. (**Acts 2:14-17**) **"Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.'" With these words and more, Peter explained that the things that were happening were the fulfillment of the long prophesied coming of the Holy Spirit. Last week, we left Peter still speaking, so let's go ahead and read Acts 2:22-36 and see what else Peter has to say.**

#### I. Scripture Reading Acts 2:22-36, NIV 1984

22 "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him: "'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, 27 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'" 29 "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this

Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

## II. Teaching

A large crowd including people from many nations was drawn together by the noise and commotion when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, and now Peter, empowered by the Spirit, is boldly preaching Jesus to the crowd. **Acts 2:22, "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know."** The great miracles of Jesus were already very famous in Israel at that time, so Peter could easily say that they already knew about these things. Now, Peter points out that these miracles, signs, and wonders are God's testimony that He Himself sent Jesus into the world.

Peter continues by reminding them of the recent events in Jerusalem. **Acts 2:23, "This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross."** Notice what Peter emphasizes. First of all, the crucifixion of Jesus was God's plan from the beginning. Before the creation of the world, the Trinity of God determined that Jesus would go into the world to die as a sacrifice to pay for the sins of the world. And, when we realize that Jesus is God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, then we understand that Jesus is God Himself coming into the world to die for our sins.



The things which happened to Jesus happened according to God's set purpose and foreknowledge. This is made very clear when we realize that many of the things which Jesus suffered were prophesied hundreds of years before Jesus was born. As a reminder of these prophecies, in your bulletin, there is a copy of a list that we used in our study of the cross about a year ago. This is not a complete list of the prophecies, it is just some examples, but please take a look at it at home. The fulfilled prophecies of Scripture are powerful proof that the Bible is the Word of God because only God knows the future.

Second, notice who crucified Jesus. Some wicked men helped, but, Peter says, "you," crucified Jesus. If we want to know who nailed Jesus to the cross, all we have to do is look in the mirror and see who is staring back at us. Go home and look in the mirror, point your finger and say it, "You crucified Jesus." Or, in other words, I crucified Jesus. If we have ever sinned, if we have ever said or done anything that was against God's law, then we are partly responsible for Jesus' death on the cross because Jesus died for our sins. The Scriptures are clear and we know it is true, **Romans 3:10, "As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one."**



It is painful to hear that we are responsible for Jesus' death. But after this bad news, comes some very Good News. The next thing Peter emphasizes is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. **Acts 2:24, "But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."** On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. Amen! The resurrection of Jesus is absolutely central to our Christian faith. The resurrection proves that Jesus' sacrifice for the sins of the world was sufficient and acceptable to God and that Jesus therefore conquered sin and death. The resurrection is also the concrete proof of God's promise that we also, all who are in Christ, will receive resurrection life with Jesus.



Peter boldly and publicly preached the resurrection of Jesus less than two months after Jesus was crucified. There was no time for a myth to develop or for a lie to take hold. Peter preached the resurrection

boldly because Peter had met the risen Lord Jesus again and again, even eating together with the risen Jesus. Peter preached the resurrection confidently; Peter knew that everyone in Jerusalem could easily go and see the empty tomb. The resurrection is the great proof that was continually preached by all of the disciples of Jesus because they knew for certain that Jesus rose from the dead.

Take a look at what Paul says in **1 Corinthians 15:3-6**, **“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.”** There were more than five hundred eyewitnesses ready to testify that they had met the risen Lord Jesus, most of whom were still alive when Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth. The evidence for the truth of the resurrection of Jesus is conclusive.

The resurrection was also prophesied in the Old Testament, hundreds of years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Peter points to this fact when he quotes from Psalm 16 saying, **(Acts 2:25-27) “David said about him: “I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.”** When David wrote these words, he was not speaking about himself. Jewish scholars agreed that this was a prophetic passage speaking about the Messiah to come. But Peter wants to make sure that no one in the crowd is confused, so Peter continues and says **(Acts 2:29), “Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.”**

Anyone who wanted could easily visit the tomb of David. It was obvious that the prophecy of the resurrection applied to the Messiah, not King David. And Peter powerfully proclaims that the prophecy is fulfilled by Jesus Christ. **Acts 2:32, “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.”** Noelle painted the scene like this (see picture). Since the large crowd could not have fit inside the house, Noelle painted Peter on the roof of the house preaching to the crowd below.

Peter proclaimed it and we also proclaim it. Jesus is alive! Amen! And Jesus is Lord! Peter wants to make sure that his audience understands this as well. Quoting from Psalm 110, Peter says, **(Acts 2:34-35) “For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’”** Everyone knew that the Messiah to come would be a descendent of David because this was prophesied in Isaiah 9; it was even common for the Messiah to be referred to as, “the son of David.” But Peter points out that David himself called the Messiah, “Lord.” To the Jewish rabbis, this was a great mystery, since in Jewish though the ancestor was always greater than the descendent.

Jesus Himself pointed out this same mystery in **Matthew 22:41-46, “While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, “What do you think about the Christ ? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied. He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.” If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.”**

The Pharisees and the Jewish teachers were baffled by Psalm 110; they could not understand why David would call the Messiah, “Lord,” when the Messiah was David’s descendent. The solution to this mystery is something that the Pharisees could not imagine; Jesus the Messiah was both the son of David and the Son of God. **Matthew 1:18** tells us, **“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.”** Joseph and Mary were both descended from King David. So, Jesus was the physical descendent of King David through Mary and, under Jewish law of the time, Jesus was also the legal descendent of King David through his adoptive father Joseph. But Mary became pregnant through the Holy Spirit, so Jesus’ true Father was God Himself,



and therefore Jesus is Lord over King David and over all things.

### III. Conclusion

Peter's argument is concise, but powerful. The Jewish people in that time were thoroughly familiar with the Old Testament prophecies that Peter quotes in Acts 2, and they would have known of the difficult problem of the Psalm 110 prophecy. Peter declares to them, as we saw last week, that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that was occurring before their eyes was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28 and that this, combined with the miracles of Jesus and especially the resurrection of Jesus are clear proofs that Jesus is both the Christ Messiah and Lord of all. Peter presents his conclusion in **Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

How will the crowd respond to Peter's message? We will see their response in our next message in Acts. But today, I want to challenge you with a more urgent question. How will you respond to the Good News of Jesus Christ? Consider Paul's words in **2 Corinthians 6:1-2, "As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."**

If you do not yet understand the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ and you need more time to learn about Jesus, then I pray that God will help you to learn what you need to know to satisfy your mind and heart and that God will help you to make a decision when you are ready.

But if your heart is burning in your chest and you have come to the point where you know that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is true and good, then, I urge you to make a decision without delay. Do you feel the conviction of sin in your heart? Do you feel as if God has His eyes on you and He is waiting for you to turn to Him? Do you feel the need for the love of God and His grace and mercy in your life? If so, then I believe that you are feeling the conviction of the Holy Spirit on your mind and heart. Do not resist Him. Do not delay. Turn to Jesus and receive His mercy and the free gift of salvation. As I pray a simple salvation prayer, open your heart and pray along with me and you will be saved. Let's pray.

### IV. Prayer

Creator God, Heavenly Father,

I acknowledge you as God and Lord over all things. I confess that I have done wrong. In my words and actions I have sinned against you. I am sorry for my sins and I now turn away from all that is wrong. I repent of my sins. I thank you for your love, mercy, and grace. I thank that You have provided a way to receive forgiveness through the cross of Jesus Christ and His shed blood. Please forgive my sins now and wash me clean. Come into my life and make me a new person. Give me faith to believe in Jesus Christ and courage to walk with Him always. Have mercy on me and pour your wonderful grace into my life. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and help me to live in your light always. Teach me to love you and to love my neighbor, for your glory. I pray in the Name of Jesus, amen.

Dear Loving Lord,

I ask for you to abundantly bless each person who prayed with me just now. Give them the full assurance of salvation, whether they prayed to receive you now for the first time, or whether they are making the decision to recommit their lives to you. Give them your Holy Spirit that they might experience the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, hope, and more in their daily lives. And give them gifts of the Spirit that they might be effective witnesses for you. Lord, please bless each and every person here this day and provide for their needs and help them to walk with Jesus always. Fill us all with Your Spirit so that we might be renewed, refreshed, and reenergized for Your work. In the Holy Name of Jesus I pray. Amen.

In your bulletin, there is also a, "My Voice Card." This can be used for comments and prayer requests anytime. In particular, if you prayed to receive Jesus for the first time today, it would be wonderful if you would use this card to let us know so we can continue to pray for God's blessing on you. Thank you and may the Lord be with you always!